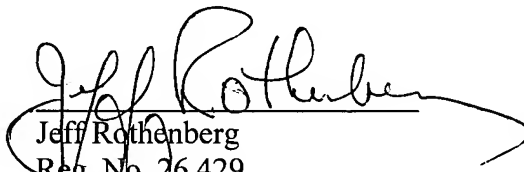


REMARKS

By this Preliminary Amendment, a cross-reference to related applications is being added to the specification, and the claims and abstract are being amended to conform with U.S. practice. More specifically, the claims are being amended to transform them from the European format to standard U.S. format, to avoid multiple dependencies, to delete reference numbers, and to ensure proper antecedent basis. Similarly the Abstract is being amended to delete reference numbers and improve its sentence structure. Claims 1-18 remain in this case.

Favorable consideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


Jeff Rothenberg
Reg. No. 26,429
Attorney for Applicant

Dated: Dec 4, 2003

Heslin Rothenberg Farley & Mesiti P.C.
5 Columbia Circle
Albany, New York 12203
Tel: 518-452-5600
Fax: 518-452-5579
E-mail: jr@hrfmlaw.com